portrait25

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SPRING 2007

Bruce Mansfield, Pat Corrigan AM and Andrew Sayers at the launch of the National Photographic Portrait Prize. Fiona-Lee Quimby/ Fairfax Photos

National Portrait Gallery, Old Parliament House

Old Parliament House, King George Terrace, Parkes, Canberra, ACT 2600
Telephone: 1800 779 955, +61 2 6270 8236 Facsimile: +61 2 6270 8181
Open daily 9am–5pm. Closed Christmas Day. $2 adults, $1 children/concessions, $5 family. Wheelchair access and assistance is available. Wheelchairs are available.

The main gallery space is the Parliamentary Library and the Robert Oatley Gallery, which houses a permanent display of Australian portraits in all media, ranging from paintings and formal busts to photographs and sketches. The John and Julie Schaeffer Gallery and the Senate Gallery are devoted to a program of both national and international exhibitions that change regularly.

National Portrait Gallery, Commonwealth Place

Commonwealth Place, Parkes Place, Parkes, Canberra, ACT 2600
Open Wednesday–Sunday 10am–5pm. Closed Christmas Day. Free Entry.
Open Public Holidays.

The website

Monthly updates on the Gallery's collection, programs and portrait news can be found at www.portrait.gov.au

Inner Circle

PORTRAIT is the magazine of the National Portrait Gallery Circle of Friends.
For further information on Membership please telephone (02) 6270 8236.

The National Portrait Gallery is funded by the Australian Government.
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PORTRAIT is generously supported by Peter Blackshaw.

The collection

Begun in May 1998, the collection is growing rapidly. The majority of works in the collection have been gifts thanks to the generosity of donors. The Gallery is creating a collection of portraits of the highest quality across all media. Two principles guide the selection of portraits for the collection: the subject must be significant in his or her field of endeavour or a known and named person whose life sets them apart as an individual of long-term public interest; and the subject must be Australian, either by birth or association. The Gallery has also established a fund to enable purchases of significant works of art. Donations of cash to this fund are tax deductible. If you would like to discuss making a bequest to the National Portrait Gallery we would like to hear from you. Please call the Director's office on (02) 6270 8210. The National Portrait Gallery has an active policy of commissioning portraits, a process which supports development of the collection.

COVER:
Portrait of Kym Bonython 1963
Gift of Kym Bonython, 2007

BACK COVER:
Portrait of Mr Bonython's speedway cap 1966
Gift of Kym Bonython, 2007

DESIGN:
Art Direction Creative

One of the most gratifying aspects of my position as Director of the National Portrait Gallery is to have watched the development of long-term commitments to the idea of the Gallery.

In this issue of PORTRAIT there are two conspicuous examples of such a long term commitment from two benefactors who were instrumental in putting the National Portrait Gallery 'on the map'. In 2000 Robert Oatley and John Schaeffer each gave $1.25 million to secure the iconic John Webber portrait of Captain James Cook for the nation. At the time both benefactors made it clear that this was not an end to their commitment, rather that they would be happy to continue to assist in the development of the Gallery's collection and exhibition program. In 2003 John Schaeffer AO gave us another iconic portrait – George Lambert's *Self portrait with gladioli* 1922 which is the subject of an article in this edition and which was the first painting that greeted visitors in the National Gallery of Australia's recent major Lambert retrospective. And this year Robert Oatley donated funds that allowed us to buy a collection of important material that adds detail to the great 18th-century story of Cook and his voyages. Some of these works are illustrated in this edition and they will form a 'setting for the jewel' when the Cook portrait goes on display in the new National Portrait Gallery building.

Many people who in the early days of the Gallery's collecting, donated funds to allow us to commission or buy portraits continue to support new proposals and new acquisitions. In this way the collection is slowly developing in quality and depth that will surprise and I am sure delight us all when the expanded display opens in the splendid new building.

This year we continue the tradition of bringing the finest art historians, writers and gallery directors to present our Annual Lecture. This year's lecture entitled 'Matisse's women', will be given by celebrated British author Hilary Spurling at the Gallery at 6.00pm on Wednesday 26 September. Hilary Spurling is well known in particular for her biographies of writers Ivy Compton-Burnett and Paul Scott and also for her two volumes on Matisse's life which won the Whitbread Book of the Year Award in 2005. To coincide with Hilary's lecture we are exhibiting a selection of wonderful Matisse portrait drawings and prints from the collection of our sister institution the National Gallery of Australia.

Andrew Sayers DIRECTOR

Somewhere to hang your cap

Kym Bonython c.1963
Courtesy of
Kym Bonython

Recently, Kym Bonython, cattle breeder, musician, jazzographer, entrepreneur, racing car driver, art consultant, gallery owner, broadcaster and author, generously donated *Portrait of Kym Bonython* and *Portrait of Mr Bonython's speedway cap* painted by John Brack to the National Portrait Gallery.

John Brack was an observer, he analysed what he saw and attempted to present it in an objective manner. Brack once commented that:

> My portraits are not simply a sort of photograph appearance of the subject. I call them cerebral paintings. I am interested in obtaining a synthesis which is a commentary on the subject and human conditions. The portrait is not just the subject but what he means in the past, the present and the future.

Kym Bonython experienced this personally as a result of having commissioned John Brack to paint his portrait in 1963.

The portrait of Bonython is accompanied by a smaller work produced three years later, featuring his chequered speedway hat dangling from a string like an intriguing work of Op Art.

In his autobiography *Ladies' legs and lemonade* Kym records his initial response to the painting:

> When at last I saw the finished work I was a trifle disappointed, because I thought there was overmuch emphasis upon a rather ill-fitting sports coat and my gold wrist watch and identity bracelet. However, I realised that Brack had sought to bring out the more extrovert side of my character, and so I wrote to him and asked whether he would be willing to add at least a portion of my celebrated chequered cap in what I unwisely referred to as 'that blank area in the top right-hand corner of the picture'. Of course I could not have chosen a less tactful phrasing because an artist regards every part of a painting, including the 'blank spaces', as part of the composition. Brack replied, 'There is no blank area in the top right-hand corner of the painting!'

Brack's compromise was to paint a special small painting of his speedway cap that could be hung alongside his portrait.

Hugh Reskymer (Kym) Bonython was born in Adelaide in 1920. After leaving school he volunteered for the Royal Australian Air Force and was a flight lieutenant during World War II; he served as a reconnaissance, torpedo bomber, and Mosquito pilot for five years, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Force Cross.

After the war Bonython went back to South Australia and began a successful farming venture, breeding Jersey cattle. Bonython sold the farming business to become a promoter and competitor at the Rowley Park Speedway from 1954 to 1973. Also taking a keen interest in speedboat racing he became an Australian Champion in both sports in 1956. Later in life Bonython played a key role in the planning and development of the Adelaide Grand Prix.

From a young age Bonython had a keen interest in music. Bonython was still a schoolboy when he presented his first radio jazz programme in 1937 and he continued broadcasting with the ABC for nearly forty years, establishing himself as a major promoter of jazz music in Australia and even had his own record shop in the mid 50s.

Bonython organised his first jazz concert in 1954. Since then he has brought out to Australia jazz legends such as Dave Brubeck and Thelonius Monk.

Portrait of Mr Bonython's speedway cap 1966
Gift of Kym Bonython, 2007

Portrait of Kym Bonython 1963
Gift of Kym Bonython, 2007

Kym Bonython began to seriously collect art in 1945 and has written six books on modern Australian painting. He earned a reputation for an infallible instinct for recognising new, unsung, innovative artists. As an owner of two art galleries, one in Adelaide which he ran off and on during 1961–1983, the other in Sydney, which he owned from 1966 to 1976, he promoted and encouraged Australian artists.

After making his mark as an art dealer in Sydney, Bonython returned to Adelaide in 1972. From his family, he brought Eurilla, the family mansion since 1917, where Kym had lived most of his life. In 1983, Eurilla burnt to the ground during the Ash Wednesday bushfires. When the fires swept down Mount Lofty all of Bonython's possessions, among them an art collection that included works by artists such as by Lloyd Rees, John Olsen, Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan and Brian Westwood along with his treasured collection of over 5,000 jazz records, were consumed by flames.

Bonython rushed from Adelaide in an attempt to save his home only to find that there was nothing that he could do. He fled his house as it was bursting into flames and was able to salvage little; however, he did rescue the portrait John Brack had painted of him along with the accompanying painting of the speedway cap. Such is the extraordinary history of this fascinating diptych.

BEATRICE THOMPSON

Portrait of Kym Bonython and *Portrait of Mr Bonython's speedway cap* will be on display as part of the exhibition *Portraits by John Brack* at the National Portrait Gallery from 24 August to 18 November 2007.

Money and swat

Andrew Sayers discusses the real cost of George Lambert's *Self portrait with gladioli* 1922

In September 1937 Maurice Lambert wrote a very direct letter to the publisher Sydney Ure Smith regarding Amy Lambert's memoir *Thirty Years of an Artist's Life*, then in preparation:

> In no circumstances whatever will my mother countenance the use of the self portrait with dressing gown as a frontispiece. A more insane idea than that I never heard. This book is about a man, do you understand? The brilliant piece of technique with which he disguised from the mediocre but revealed to the sensitive just what a few years in Australia had done to him is not what this book is about.

In Maurice's remonstrance there are echoes of the line that infuses his mother's book – that Australia not only broke up a family but killed the artist. But there is a sense, too, in his words that Australia unmanned the artist – that it brought out an effete quality, warmed the idea that he was a hot-house rarity – or as he put it himself, 'a Chippendale chair in a country where timber is cheap'. Maurice's reading – and it was doubtless Amy's reading of the painting, too draws our attention to the self portrait's ambiguity, its strangeness and its inherent sense of strain.

In general, critics' response to Lambert in the 1920s mixed deprecation of his mannerisms equally with appreciation of his dexterity. The stagy portrait is the very embodiment of the idea floated by a journalist in 1922 that Lambert 'dearly loves a pose'. The pose's lack of logic was picked up by perceptive commentators – including Hans Heysen – who didn't think the parts of the portrait fitted together. In general, commentary on the portrait implies that Lambert's gesture served purposely to demonstrate the artist's technical and analytical skill. Julian Ashton summed up the widespread feeling in 1924 when he wrote that he would not quarrel with Lambert's affectations 'as long as they are painted as well as that'.

The first striking aspect of *Self portrait with gladioli* is a certain peculiarity about the composition. The space in the painting is seemingly very shallow and the blooms are crowded into the foreground corner, seeming to fall against the front of the dressing-gown. Perhaps they were an afterthought. Had they not been included, the lower half of the composition would fall away for there is certainly no curvaceous stomach to fill out that part of the picture. Lambert's determination to avoid what he considered a basic compositional fault – to have a diagonal running out of the corner of a painting – accounts for the broken angle of the stems and their rather throw-away disposition in the crystal vase.

The hands in the *Self portrait with gladioli* are very conspicuous. Hands were the focus of Lambert's most famous exercise in virtuosity – the drawing *Left and Right* of 1925, which includes another self portrait. It is no accident that this self portrait shares

Self portrait (unfinished 1921)
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Purchased 1930

OPPOSITE:
Self portrait with gladioli 1922
Gift of John Schaeffer AO 2003

Left and Right 1925
Art Gallery of
New South Wales

OPPOSITE:
The artist and the Geelong memorial figure (self portrait)
c.1924
Tasmanian Museum
and Art Gallery
Purchased with
funds from the
Art Foundation of
Tasmania 1985

a sheet with the bravura exercise of drawing hands. Lambert is telling us that the hand is the artist – and the artist is clearly pleased with his cleverness.

The third notable element in *Self portrait with gladioli* is the dressing gown. Is Lambert showing himself almost-dressed for dinner – about to go out, in French cuffs and cufflinks – or has he come in from another of the dinners that he regularly complained about as a distraction from work? How are we to explain what looks like a second robe, in Thea Proctor's favoured scheme of violet and white stripes, under the velvet gown? The 1923 reviewer in the *Australasian* described Lambert's getup as a 'rest robe' made of 'greenery-yellow' chiffon velvet. His readers would have recognised that as an allusion to the effete aesthete of Gilbert and Sullivan's Patience – the 'greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery/ Foot in the grave young man'. Perhaps that had something to do with the artist's wife and son insisting that you couldn't use this picture – which they described as 'the self portrait with dressing gown' – to stand at the front of a book 'about a man'.

In the 18th century, in particular, there is a range of portraits of male sitters in elegant loungewear from which Lambert may have taken inspiration. Whatever else we might see in Lambert's dressing gown, however, there is nothing about it that connotes the artist's life as a worker. This is interesting because in January 1922 he often railed in his letters to Amy against interruptions to his work – 'If only I could be an artist, reckless and irresponsible. The sort of creature that everyone, when he meets me, thinks I am!' At the same time he was telling the world to forget the notion of artistic genius and concentrate instead on treating artists as tradesmen. This foppish robe is not work-a-day, nor are these hands, like collapsing fans, the tools of an honest labourer.

I believe Lambert had already essayed the artist-as-worker self portrait before he undertook the *Self portrait with gladioli*.

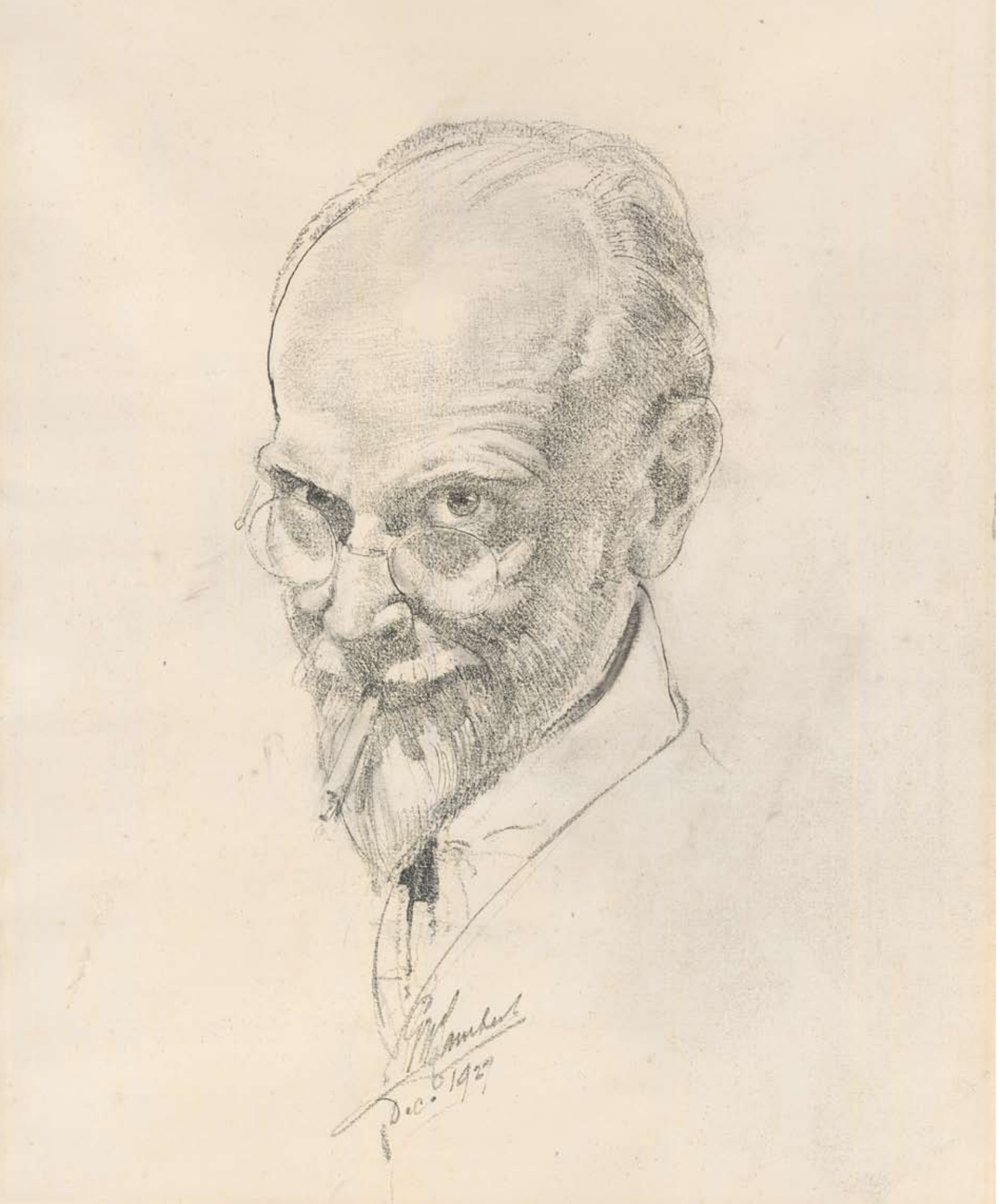
In September 1921 Lambert wrote to Amy that, in addition to a 'wild dashing portrait' that became known as *The White Glove*, he had on the slips 'a self portrait for Sydney's new Uffizi Gallery of Australian artists' portraits'. In 1921 the trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales had begun requesting prominent Australian artists to paint self portraits with a view to creating a self portrait gallery on the Uffizi model. Lambert was among the first to be asked and he agreed. But he never delivered. Six years later, when he was besieged with commissions, requests from dealers and reminders of work outstanding, the Gallery, too, wrote desiring to know 'whether they will have the pleasure of receiving the portrait at an early date'.

I think it is very likely that the self portrait destined for the Art Gallery of New South Wales that he had 'on the slips' in 1921 is the unfinished self portrait that was in Lambert's studio at the time of his death, which was bought by the Gallery in 1930. Traditionally, this has been dated c.1930. However, the features are much closer to those we see in *Self portrait with gladioli* than in later self portraits such as the 1927 drawing.

There are several reasons why Lambert might have abandoned the 'Uffizi' self portrait, which he was expected to donate to the Gallery. He agreed to paint it in July 1921, and had made a start by September. In October, he received a letter from the Gallery in which they set out a preferred uniform size for the self portrait – 20 x 24 inches – which was the size of the one Tom Roberts had already delivered. That is somewhat smaller than the size of this work – 38 x 26 inches, and the disparity may well have been enough to cause Lambert to stop work. Secondly, in late 1921 he was overtaken by paying commissions and so probably lost interest in a painting that was only for the sake of kudos.

If the date of 1921 is correct – and it is supported by the evidence of the canvas, which is from the same Melbourne supplier as the *Self portrait with gladioli* – the self portrait makes a very telling contrast with the National Portrait Gallery's 1922 portrait, which would have been its immediate successor. In the earlier painting, the artist really is a worker. He has the tools of his trade in his hands: brushes, palette and maulstick. Here painting is a shirt-sleeves business – no mystery, no theatricality, just hard effort. Yet the work itself is pedestrian, incorporating neither the intriguing irony of Lambert's 1920 self portrait *The Official Artist*, nor the verve and challenge of his 1922 *Self portrait with gladioli*.

The story of Lambert's life in the 1920s is one of work, work, work. His letters of the 1920s complain of his relentlessness of effort, and his frustration at distractions. Some of the physical exhaustion resulting from his efforts at commissioned public sculpture, along with other demanding projects, is evident in a small self portrait sketch, again discovered in his studio at the time of his death and probably dating from 1924.



Here the thin, singleted artist is seated, dwarfed by the virile upright figure of the sculpted nude and the reversed monumental canvas in the background. A later self portrait drawing, *The Broken Hand*, shows Lambert in the sculptor's studio, surrounded by his assistants, crowded around a fragment of sculpture. The artist is the only one seated, his shoulders hunched over the shattered hand. This drawing, I think, can be read as a metaphor of breakdown.

Maurice Lambert's analysis of *Self portrait with gladioli* proposes a double meaning to the portrait – one for easy consumption, the other more complex and revealing of whatever it was that Australia 'did to' the artist.

Certainly, if we compare the portrait with the well-known self portrait of 1909 we can see that Lambert has worn away in the thirteen intervening years. The silky hair has been replaced with a prominent and balding dome. Yet Lambert seems to have enjoyed the possibilities of his skull. He exaggerated its interesting outline even more dramatically in his self portrait drawing of 1927 – a real portrait of middle age in which he peers over the top of his glasses, questioning, wry and sceptical.

Apart from the general 'paring away to the essentials' of the head, *Self portrait with gladioli* betrays a striking leanness of body. Although this was the result of Lambert's malaria, he nonetheless regarded it with some pride. He described the result of one of his periodic 'overhauls' in hospital in late 1922 as 'most awfully fine muscular and brainy condition with figure so graceful that even the Sydney belles are jealous of my proportions'. Four months later he commented 'I am as thin as a sapling and hard as nails.' This time, however, he further admitted to being 'a bit of a ghost, restless and very short tempered'. The *Self portrait with gladioli* encapsulates the ambivalence about his return to Australia that had surfaced in the latter part of 1921 and is a constant theme in Lambert's letters the following year. He expressed it forcefully in a poem he addressed to his wife's sister in 1922:

'But you may write a letter to my wife
And tell her all the news you learn of me,
My butterfly existence in this town
Which now unrolls the carpet red
And gives a tribute grudgingly to me
Who after all these years of exile comes,
Like dog to vomit, and mark you, alone,
To his own town, to smell the smells of youth,
To sit and snarl a challenge to the pack,
Or, wagging, grin a welcome to the few,
To those who like yourself, appreciate'.

Self portrait with gladioli is the ultimate 'snarl and challenge to the pack' – an expression of attitude that became especially meaningful after Lambert's election as an Associate of the Royal Academy in November 1922. He succeeded in sending the work to London in 1924 for display there, writing

Australia will of course expect great things and excitement when my self portrait is exhibited in the RA but I am too old a campaigner to expect either excitement or even a just appreciation. I just say it was my big effort and it cost me dearly in money and swat.

It is not surprising that after his death the family associated the *Self portrait with gladioli* with Lambert's demise. It was clear that what Lambert had intended as an 'Australian visit' in 1921 had become a permanent return. Australia had him and would keep him – alternately fêting him and working him, inflating and knocking him down, until he died. As much as he loved to attitudinise, even he succumbed to the truth that every artist and sitter knows: one can't keep up a pose for ever.

ANDREW SAYERS

This is an edited version of a paper given at the George Lambert Symposium at the Australian War Memorial on 29 June 2007.

Self portrait 1909
National Gallery of Victoria

OPPOSITE:
Self portrait 1927
National Gallery of Victoria

Florence Broadhurst 1968
Joshua Smith

Japanese Floral in Chilli Red on Tan Silk Slub wallpaper, from the *Blueprints* wallpaper collection Design by Florence Broadhurst, courtesy of Signature Prints

Be bold

Revival of a design doyenne

The name of Florence Broadhurst, one of Australia's most significant wallpaper and textile designers, is now firmly cemented in the canon of Australian art and design thanks to a recent posthumous revival of her designs, two books and a film about her life and mysterious death. This close attention, in turn, has reignited public interest in her fascinating life story. The National Portrait Gallery has recently acquired a 1968 portrait of Broadhurst by her mentor and painting teacher Joshua Smith – the first of his works to enter the collection. Undeservedly Smith is most often remembered as the subject for the 1943 Archibald Prize–winning work by William Dobell that was denounced as caricature, sparking Australia's first large-scale art scandal, ensuing court case and public debate about objective versus subjective portraiture. Despite this uncalled-for notoriety Smith remains a significant figure in the history of Australian traditionalist portraiture.

Born in 1899 to a modest, yet later landowning family in rural Mount Perry, Queensland, Florence Broadhurst was always determined to make something of her life and knew that to do so she had to leave home and family behind – preferably as quickly as possible. At a very young age Florence and her sisters were offered piano lessons and it became clear that Florence had talent, good keyboard skills and a clear contralto voice. Soon she was travelling by train to Bundaberg, sixty-six miles away, for personal singing lessons. Performing for family and friends clearly did not satisfy her for long and her first public performance was at the Grand Patriotic Concert in Bundaberg in August 1918 – yet a solo singing career never eventuated. Plan B was swiftly enacted when Florence joined the musical comedy sextet, the 'Globe Trotters' and began her travels through South East Asia and China under the stage name of 'Miss Bobby Broadhurst'. Membership of other musical theatre troupes followed along with favourable reviews of her singing and Charleston dancing abilities. These experiences led to the establishment of the Broadhurst Academy in Shanghai, a business offering the booming expatriate population tuition in various arts 'all the rage back home' including violin, modern ballroom dancing, banjolele playing and journalism.

During a brief sojourn back in Queensland in 1927, Florence was involved in a car accident – the resultant head injuries putting paid to her singing career. Undaunted, she travelled to England in October of the same year. In 1929 she married Percy Kahn, a stockbroker, with whom she directed Pellier Ltd, Robes and Modes, a high-end boutique in New Bond Street, London, under the assumed name of Madame Pellier. The marriage to Kahn seems to have broken down sometime in the mid-1930s and while working and designing at Pellier, Florence met Leonard Lewis a handsome diesel engineer, and by 1939 they were living in rural Surrey. In World War II Florence contributed to the war effort by offering hospitality to Australian soldiers abroad through volunteer organisations.

Returning to Australia in 1949 with Lewis and their son Robert, a relocation possibly prompted by an infidelity on Lewis' part, Florence launched into her third career, that of landscape painter and society hostess. Travelling through central Australia, Queensland and New South Wales, she was a highly prolific painter, but perhaps a better self-promoter, with a reviewer commenting on her solo exhibition in 1954 at David Jones Gallery; 'She does not understand the true character of the landscape she paints, that her eye, indeed, only devours surface beauties, skin deep at best'. Despite establishing Australian (Hand Printed) Wallpapers Pty Ltd in a small premises behind Lewis' motor business in St Leonards, Broadhurst

The Cranes in Dark Beige and Earth Red on Lime Silk Slub wallpaper, from the *Blueprints* wallpaper collection. Design by Florence Broadhurst, courtesy of Signature Prints

Florence Broadhurst 1975
Lewis Morley
Gift of the artist 2003

continued to pursue her fine art career. She participated in group exhibitions, entered the Sulman Prize in 1956, the Archibald in 1962 and 1966 and the Wynne in 1964. It is likely that during this time, either through mutual acquaintances or through her socialite activities, that Florence met Joshua Smith, who first painted her portrait for the Archibald Prize in 1962 and this portrait in 1968.

The 1968 portrait depicts Florence with her characteristic auburn bouffant wearing a plain orange knit top – a stark contrast with photographs taken at the time which repeatedly show Florence with bigger hair, a great deal more make-up, wearing brighter, bolder patterns and hands festooned with antique jewellery. The message this image sends out is of quite a different order. The real reasons behind this rather Spartan presentation, like so many other things about Florence Broadhurst, will remain a mystery. The focal point of the portrait is the gold wedding band on her left hand held aloft – an interesting focus when her erstwhile husband Lewis had been living in Queensland since 1964. The nexus between artist and subject might go some way towards explaining the gulf between the ebullient public persona of Florence Broadhurst and the modest woman depicted here. Yve Close, a painter who had a close twenty-year association with Joshua Smith has said that for Smith the aim of all his portraits was 'the importance of a viewer sensing the intrinsic personality housed within the outer façade'. Dame Mary Gilmore, a friend, champion and portrait subject of Smith's wrote; 'Mr Joshua Smith does bring out the inner dynamics in portraits. For you remember the personality of the sitter, more than just the face. And it is the personality that is the subject, if a painter can paint a portrait as it should be painted'.

Between 1959 and October 1977 Broadhurst Designs produced a phenomenal 530 hand-drawn patterns for silk-screened wallpapers of great diversity and complexity. Her company was known for its innovation and ability to adapt distinctive wallpaper designs from the latest trends coming out of Europe and the United States and blending them in sometimes startling ways with traditional motifs. Yet was Broadhurst herself the originator of this vast array of designs? The answer is yes and no – although it is her name that adorns all the fabrics and papers that came out of the business, Broadhurst's team of young, often previously inexperienced artists were most likely the ones that executed the final designs from her original concept. Business was booming and certainly no one denies she had a great eye for design, with Florence calling her revolutionary handprinted creations 'vigorous designs for modern living'. All this came to an abrupt end when, on 16 October 1977, when Broadhurst was murdered in her Paddington wallpaper showroom. Helen O'Neill's book, *Florence Broadhurst: Her Secret and Extraordinary Lives* and Gillian Armstong's docu-drama, *Unfolding Florence* (both 2006), posit two different possible scenarios for Broadhurst's murder – both equally compelling – yet the case remains unsolved.

In this portrait, in artist and subject, we see the convergence of two lives marred by controversy: Joshua Smith's reluctant involvement in the 'Dobell Case' would have long-lasting effects on his confidence and precipitate his self-imposed withdrawal to the fringes of Australian art, despite numerous commissions following his own Archibald win in 1944. The multiple mysteries surrounding Florence still linger to this day, one of which is the true authorship of her prolific design output; another the tragic and brutal nature of her unsolved murder.

KATHERINE RUSSELL

The highest honour

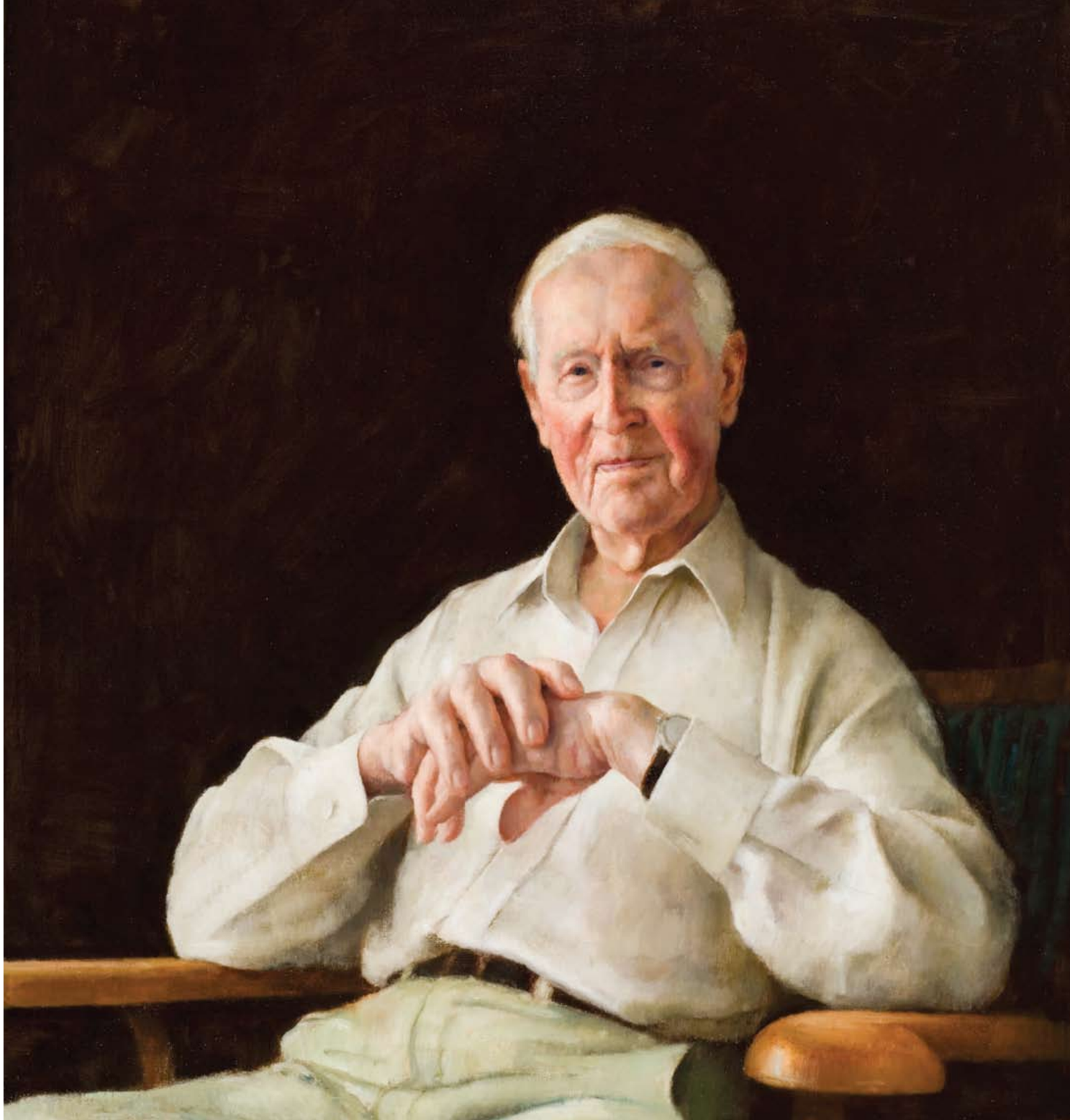
Bringing eminent scientist Frank Fenner and artist Jude Rae together for the National Portrait Gallery commission was like matchmaking

It isn't surprising to learn that Frank Fenner is ninety-three. After all, it is almost inconceivable that he could achieve as much as he has in less time. But meeting Fenner is a different matter. His good humour and gentle nature are immediately apparent. His mannerisms, his speech patterns and his innate curiosity are those he possessed as a young man and barely altered by the years. Frank Fenner somehow manages to give the impression of being the same age of whomever he is speaking with.

This is not to say he is not imposing: he is. Professor Frank Fenner is one of Australia's most distinguished scientists. His eminence in the field of virology is particularly associated with the control of Australia's rabbit plague and the eradication of smallpox, achievements of global significance.

John Frank Fenner AC CMG MBE, was born in Ballarat in 1914. Both his parents were teachers, his father being the principal of the Ballarat School of Mines. The family moved to Adelaide in 1916, when Frank's father was appointed Superintendent of Technical Education in South Australia. His father's interest in science sparked an early interest in geology but Fenner ended up completing degrees in medicine at the University of Adelaide in 1938; however, according to Fenner 'this was before the mineral boom and the only jobs in geology were in universities'. His medical studies complete, Fenner served in the Australian Army Medical Corps in the Middle East and in Papua New Guinea. His decision to take a diploma of tropical medicine in the early days of the war was prescient and his work as a malariologist in the Army was to save many the lives of many Australian soldiers in the Pacific theatre. Fenner was awarded an MBE for his wartime studies of malaria.

Fenner's interest had always been in research rather than in practicing medicine and after the war he was hand picked by Sir Macfarlane Burnet work at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne, researching the mousepox virus as a model for human poxviruses such as smallpox. After a fellowship at the Rockefeller Institute in New York, he was, in 1949 at the age of just thirty-four, appointed Professor of Microbiology at the new John Curtin School of Medical Research at the Australian National University where he continued his research on the myxoma virus. The beautiful new buildings that house the School today bear little resemblance to the scratch built laboratories in temporary wooden huts that Fenner



Professor Frank Fenner
2007
Jude Rae
Commissioned with funds provided by Mr Anthony Adair and Ms Karen MacLeod

had for his research in the early 1950s. Despite initial teething problems, the department prospered, attracting motivated staff and dozens of visiting workers from all over the world.

In Canberra, Fenner's work on the myxoma virus was instrumental in controlling the devastating rabbit plagues that had savaged Australian agriculture for nearly a century. In a daring gesture, Fenner together with colleagues Macfarlane Burnet and Ian Clunies Ross injected themselves with the myxoma virus prior to its release to reassure the public that the virus was not dangerous to humans. While most rabbits were killed by the imported virus that produced myxomatosis, a small number survived. The recording and analysing of the impact of the virus, the transmission and the build up of resistance to the disease established his research as a classic and enduring model of viral evolution in the scientific world. Fenner's pioneering work in the emerging field of viral genetics was recognised when he was appointed President of the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (1970–75). Fenner was appointed Director of the John Curtin School in 1967, the same year he started with the World Health Organisation as Chairman of the Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication, perhaps his greatest project.

Fenner has been elected to the fellowship of numerous faculties and academies, most notably the Foundation Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science (1954), Fellow of the Royal Society (1958), and Foreign Associate of the United States National Academy of Sciences (1977). Fenner has received many awards. Among these are the Britannica Australia Award for Medicine (1967), the Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science Medal (1980), the World Health Organisation Medal (1988), the Japan Prize (1988), the Senior Australian Achiever of the Year (1999), the Albert Einstein World Award for Science (2000), and the Prime Minister's Science Prize (2002).
This year Fenner's alma mater, the University of Adelaide, made him a Doctor of the University, its highest honour. Fenner Hall, providing residence for post graduate and mature age students on the ANU campus, was named in recognition of Professor Fenner's contribution to the ANU.

Studies for the portrait of Professor Frank Fenner
2007
Jude Rae

His current project is a history of medical research.

Commissioning a portrait is somewhat like matchmaking. That is to say, it is something that aspires to be an objective process, but is ultimately an intuitive practice. While the new breed of matchmakers and online dating services trust the authority of computer data bases to compare like fields to come up with the perfect match, ultimately the power of emotion inevitably triumphs over logic. Just knowing who is out there and bringing them together is the science. Jude Rae is an artist renowned for her subtlety, attention to detail, keen powers of observation and conceptual vision. Like Fenner, she lives in Canberra. It seemed like a good match.

When Andrew Sayers showed Professor Fenner the series of small paintings by Rae that were on display in the exhibition *Truth and Likeness*, he was full of admiration for her skill. It was an easy next step to bring artist and sitter together and the two responded positively to each other. Rae was commissioned to produce a portrait of the scientist soon after and a series of sittings took place. A combination of chatty meetings, cups of tea and preliminary drawings allowed the artist to get to know the scientist better and to work up the portrait. Rae described Fenner as the ideal subject, 'he was entertaining and lively. And gentlemanly in an old fashioned way, if that makes sense. He only insisted on one thing and that was that I would paint him in his white shirt … this was the nearest he got to vanity.'

Rae toyed with the idea of adding select objects in the background, the kind of telling accessories that would inform the viewer of Professor Fenner's life and achievements. For a short time she considered the many medals and awards that he had earned but dismissed the notion as too cold. The sole exception perhaps was a crude home-made trophy crafted by his friends in the lab that parodied the double needle inoculators that Fenner invented and used in the final campaign to banish smallpox. Typically, this was the award that Fenner valued most. In the end Rae decided that there was no need for any props. If she could capture in paint the impressive power of Fenner's complex personality, that would be enough. She has, and yes, it is.

MICHAEL DESMOND

Journey into Headspace…

When one considers the road travelled thus far, the theme of The Journey for the final Headspace student portrait exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery Commonwealth Place could not be more apt

We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us.

MARCEL PROUST

Step by Step
Rhiana Chan
Year 9
Melba–Copland
Secondary School

OPPOSITE:
The Heart
Alana Beitz
Year 10
Alfred Deakin
High School

And, what a journey it's been! Although each year the Headspace exhibitions have grown exponentially in size as the word about this unique learning opportunity spread, the central tenet of the project has remained constant: for secondary students to engage with portraiture as a means of self-expression.

There are a number of features that set the Headspace project apart from other, often State-based, student art exhibitions such as Artexpress in New South Wales, Top Arts VCE in Victoria and Year 12 Perspectives in Western Australia.

Firstly, Headspace is open to students in Years 7–12, whereas the other exhibitions showcase only the best graduating Year 12 assessment work for visual/studio arts. Secondly, each year since the project's inception, students have taken up the challenge to create work in response to a theme; *Headspace* (2000), *Hearts + Heads* (2001), *Being Me* (2002), *Facing Memory* (2003), *Crystal Gazing* (2004), *Who Am I?* (2005), *Me and My Place* (2006) and now *The Journey* (2007). The thematic nature of Headspace is another characteristic that differentiates the project from other student art exhibits, as works are selected on the basis of a symbiosis between the work itself and the accompanying student's statement that links the work to the year's theme. The third aspect that marks the uniqueness of the Headspace project is its ever-increasing scope. What began as an invitational exercise for students from within a 200km radius of the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra has now grown to encompass schools along the eastern seaboard as far north as Brisbane, throughout western New South Wales and Victoria, Gippsland and south to Melbourne.

The Headspace project's incremental growth beyond its original catchment has often occurred as teachers move to new schools and introduce Headspace to a new set of pupils – apposite for an initiative from a national cultural institution to be reaching out across the country. Headspace's increasing geographic reach is matched by its impact on other levels; participating teachers credit Headspace with altering the way art practice is perceived within their schools in a positive way.

Headspace is not an art competition; rather it is driven by the spirit of participation and to this end, in recent years, certificates of participation are issued to exhibiting students so their involvement in the Canberra exhibition is acknowledged at the school level even if they don't have the opportunity to visit the show. Yet Headspace doesn't only affect participating students and teachers. Over the years it has become evident that these exhibitions have broad reach into the community, whether it be through a personal connection with an exhibitor as family member, friend, colleague or educator or links into the museum and educational communities.

The notion of Headspace as forum is best demonstrated at each year's opening event – with families and friends coming from far and wide to share the energy and vitality of the project coupled with the personal pride students take in having their work included in a nationally significant exhibition and given the due respect and treatment that any artist displayed in the Portrait Gallery receives.

In the eight years that the Headspace project has been running, the program has subtlety shifted to meet learning needs and keep pace with exhibition development technologies. In recent years the Gallery has facilitated Headspace preparatory workshops for participating students to come to the Gallery and work with museum educators to explore the exhibition theme through art making and to spark ideas for the work they ultimately submit.

In 2007 the submission process also changed. Now teachers send digital images of student works to the Gallery from which the exhibition is selected, whereas formerly works were sent to the Gallery for selection by mail or courier. This new selection process has lightened the load for both teachers and gallery staff and through it Headspace has set the benchmark for the way other Portrait Gallery submission-based projects are managed.

At the outset I mentioned that *Headspace 8: The Journey* is the last instalment of the Headspace project at the National Portrait Gallery Commonwealth Place, but it is by no means the end of the road for the Headspace project – an ever evolving and expansive journey as the Portrait Gallery moves to its new building.

KATHERINE RUSSELL

The expression of the intimate exchange
between the artist and his model.
Drawings that contain all the subtleties
of observations made during the work
arise from a fermentation within,
like bubbles in a pond.

HENRI MATISSE

Matisse drawing Nezy with a rose 1942
Andre Ostier
National Gallery of Australia

OPPOSITE:
Themes and variations (Annelies) A13 1946
National Gallery of Australia

Listening to form

The talented society portraitist of the late 19th century, John Singer Sargent, once described a portrait as 'a likeness in which there is something wrong about the mouth.' For Henri Matisse a portrait was an entirely different venture of expression and he considered drawing to be the most intimate means to this end. Whether Matisse drew with charcoal, pencil or lithographic tusche, it was his view that drawing was the 'purist' and 'most direct' means of translation. Throughout his career, Matisse produced in drawing and printmaking some remarkable portraits and figure studies including depictions of a favourite model of the time, such as Lydia Delectorskaya and Annelies Nelck, or a family member including his grandson Paul Matisse.

Matisse described his method of capturing the essence of a sitter in his essay on portraits published in 1957 the year of his death:

> I find myself before a person who interests me and, pencil or charcoal in my hand, I set down her appearance on the paper, more or less freely. After half-an-hour or an hour I am surprised to see an image that is a more or less precise likeness of the person with whom I am in contact gradually appear on my paper.

Head of a woman 1972
National Gallery
of Australia

OPPOSITE:
Portrait of Paul Matisse
1946
National Gallery
of Australia

Then, after a certain interval, where Matisse underwent a kind of 'unconscious mental fermentation', the artist would have the sitter return to the studio to continue the process:

> And thanks to this fermentation, in conformity with the impressions I received from my subject during the first sitting, I mentally reorganise my drawing with more certainty than there was in the result of the first contact.

The person's attributes now has been absorbed and distilled within the artist, the drawing of the image then flowed from the brain to the hand, developing what was now in Matisse's view:

> The expression of the intimate exchange between the artist and his model. Drawings that contain all the subtleties of observations made during the work arise from a fermentation within, like bubbles in a pond.

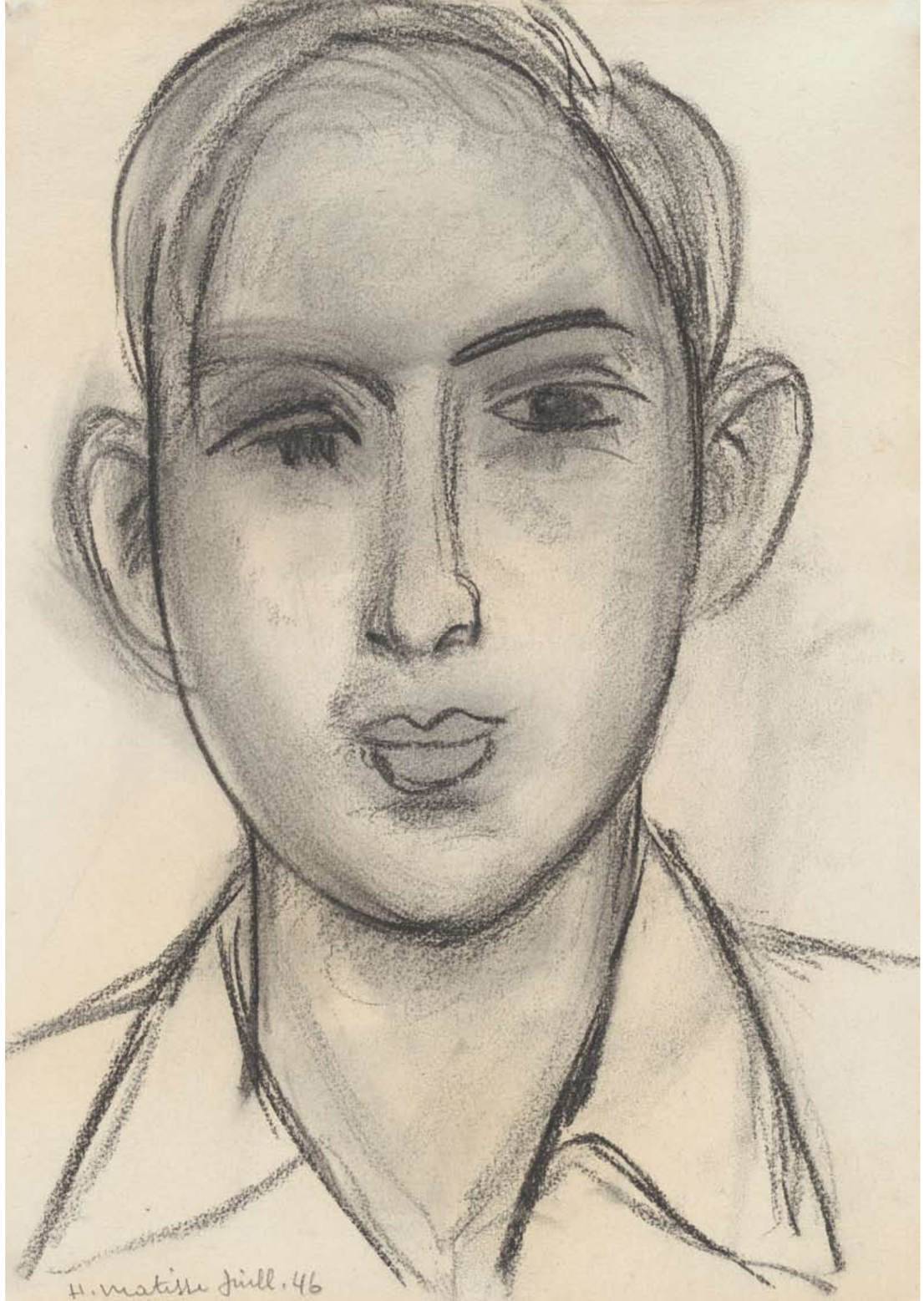
This method of working Matisse applied in the six-year period from 1936 to1942 when he made a series of pen and charcoal studies of female figures dressed in a richly embroidered Romanian blouse, which was owned by his model, secretary and later companion, Lydia Delectorskaya. The charcoal drawing of 1938 has Mme Delectorskaya modelling her own blouse. We can identify her as the model from the characteristic full lips, almond eyes with finely arched eyebrows, softened by curling light coloured locks of hair. The richly decorative costume drawn in charcoal, smudged and then drawn again, enhances the sitter's physiognomy.

During the years 1941 to 1942 Matisse embarked on other concentrated programs of drawing completing 158 compositions which he arranged in thematic groups, known as *Themes and variations*. As the artist outlined in his account of his working methods on portraits, he usually began with a carefully charcoal study, followed by a sequence in fine lines, such as pencil. Matisse produced these drawings in an almost trance-like state, circling the model – aiming for the essence of the character and a refinement of presentation. In a letter to his daughter Marguerite Duthuit, he wrote: 'for a year I have made a very considerable effort, one of the most important in my life. I have perfected my drawing and made surprising progress', adding that the qualities he was searching for were 'ease and sensibility, liberally expressed with a great variety of sensations and a minimum of means. It is like a flowering.' Keen to continue Matisse was to produce a later sequence of *Themes and variations* executed in 1946 were of a favourite model of the time Dutch-born Annelies Nelck. Matisse reveals the power of a series of refined drawing of this chic young woman in the France of the 1940s.

Family portraits have also figured large in Matisse's oeuvre. After the dark years of the war, the artist was particularly fond of portraying his grandchildren. It was a very personal means of getting to know the younger generation of his family. As a child of thirtenn years, Paul Matisse travelled from his home in America to France to see his grandfather in 1946. As the grandson later recalled in 1971, 'I remember my surprise at his asking me to tell him about a movie, now forgotten, which I had recently seen. It struck me as a great waste of the time between us, but under the circumstances ... I complied.'

It was, however, a ruse on Matisse's part, a means of observing and absorbing the essentials of his little grandson, bringing himself physically and emotionally closer to Paul, a family loved one whom he had not seen for sometime. It became an intense and intimate experience both for the artist and the sitter, resulting in a series of psychologically charged but understated drawings in charcoal and pencil. As Paul Matisse commented years after the experience:

> In a short while he started to draw, and as I continued



with my description, no doubt in very rusty French,
I slowly began to realise what was going on between us.
He was listening to form rather than content, a
distinction I had never explicitly experienced before.
He was looking with an intensity that would have robbed
even the most brilliant discourse of meaning, and then
suddenly I was free. I remember clearly the inner joy of
discovering that we were coexisting on a level that was
quite new to me. He was drawing away, complete unto
himself, beaming out to me with his intense regards;
he was a man living to the fullest immediate extent
of his capacity, and I, with my silly movie story, was
discovering meaning where I had never found it before.
I too was momentarily swept up into an existence in
which quality rather than quantity held the master place.

Matisse also used the face for other artistic purposes. In 1943 after several years of persuasion Matisse agreed to develop and artist's book, *Pasiphaé: Chant de Minos* – by Henry de Montherlant, whose work the artist described as possessing 'very rare literary quality.' Montherlant's *Pasiphaé* was a composite poem and drama loosely drawn from the ancient myth, where Pasiphaë, the wife of King Minos of Crete, fell in love with a white bull. In the classical tale, Pasiphaë disguised herself by changing from woman to animal so that the beast desired her. In Montherlant's *Pasiphaé*, the emphasis is placed more on the passion, romance and light, rather than on revenge, bestiality and darkness of the ancient Greek and Latin tales.

For *Pasiphaé*, Matisse chose the relatively simple technique of linocut. This he did with startling success, for his forms were outlined in shimmering white from the gauged line set on a black inked surface, reiterating Montherlant's theme of light in darkness, like the embracing figures who were 'carried up to the stars'. As well as episodes relating directly to poetry included, Matisse prepared for the de-luxe edition a sequence depicting the metamorphosis of the hapless Pasiphaë, transformed by her passion from beauty to beast. For the tragic tale of the queen of Crete, Matisse created beautiful linear compositions in white on a black surface, where we observe the transformation from woman to animal.

On the death of his friend, the poet John-Antoine Nau, Matisse decided to pay homage to him by celebrating their mutual love of Martinique – 'a waiting paradise' in the words of the poet. For artist and poet alike, this country, set in the seas of the Caribbean, was a paradise populated with particularly beautiful women. For a proposed publication of Nau's poetry, Matisse prepared a series of portraits of these women, wonderfully simple and sensuous in their appearance. As the project progressed, Matisse chose one youthful Caribbean model after another for inspiration for his art and to suit the poetic themes.

Having completed drawings for his venture with Nau in the years 1950 to 1953, Matisse died after only a few of his compositions had been transferred onto the stone.

The book with its sequence of women's faces was published posthumously by the lithographer Fernand Mourlot. The series has the understatement and refinement born of years of experience and reveal Matisse as a master draughtsman who was successful in his once stated desire to 'reconceive in simplicity.'

JANE KINSMAN Senior Curator of International Prints, Drawings and Illustrated Books, National Gallery of Australia.

Matisse biographer Hilary Spurling will deliver the 2007 National Portrait Gallery Annual Lecture: *Matisse's Women* on Wednesday 26 September. An exhibition of drawings and prints by Henri Matisse from the National Gallery of Australia will be on display to coincide with the Annual Lecture.

Romanian blouse 1938
National Gallery
of Australia

OPPOSITE:
Figure in a coat 1935
National Gallery
of Australia

Cook in context

Robert Oatley's continuing benefaction has helped the National Portrait Gallery acquire works that add another layer to the Cook story

In 2000 the National Portrait Gallery acquired a 'foundation picture' for the new collection, the remarkable *Portrait of Captain James Cook* RN 1782 by John Webber. The work was purchased with funds provided by the Commonwealth Government and the generous assistance of Mr John Schaeffer AO and Mr Robert Oatley.

At the time of purchase Mr Oatley mentioned that should any associated material on Cook become available for acquisition he would again be pleased to assist. Seven years later and true to his word, Mr Oatley kindly agreed to help the National Portrait Gallery buy several new items that celebrate the life and achievements of one of the greatest of all maritime explorers.

Four etchings, a Wedgewood relief and a medallion contextualise Cook's three prodigious voyages to the Pacific that were undertaken in a space of just eleven years. The works are a testament to the appeal and success of Cook, who at the forefront of the expansion of the British Empire, sated the public desire for progress and adventure. These acquisitions are exquisitely executed with supreme skill by artists, engravers and sculptors in formats that are intimate, easily transported, celebratory and collectable.

The Royal Society executed a medal in commemoration of Cook's life. Cast in silver and depicting Cook in profile, this portrait format is scantly represented in the Gallery collection, but is a vital reference to the history of the genre. A lovely portrait alternative is the Wedgwood bas-relief front view bust portrait of Cook. The image is based on a painting by William Hodges, the official artist on the second voyage, *Resolution* (1772–1775). In the same oval format is a matching pair of engravings of Cook and Captain James King, a rare depiction of the surviving commander of the third, and ill fated, Pacific journey. They were completed by Francesco Bartolozzi and are based on the painting by voyage artist on the third journey, John Webber.

Portrait of Captain James Cook RN 1782
John Webber
Purchased 2000 by the Commonwealth Government with the generous assistance of Robert Oatley and John Schaeffer AO

Captain James Cook and *Captain James King* 1784
Francesco Bartolozzi after John Webber
Purchased with funds provided by Robert Oatley

OPPOSITE:
Omai, a Native of Ulaietea 1774
Francesco Bartolozzi after Nathaniel Dance
Purchased with funds provided by Robert Oatley

Webber did not witness the death of Captain Cook at Kealakekua Bay, but his famous depiction of the event was replicated in an etching by Bartolozzi and William Byrne. The Gallery has now secured a rare first issue of the separately issued engraving of this event. The popular European curiosity for the exotic is apparent in this work, as too in the etching of Omai, a Native of Ulaietea, a Tahitian man tagged as the "embodiment of Rousseau's Noble Savage". These works create an additional layer of story telling in the Cook experience and are a wonderful compliment to the Gallery's 2000 purchase.

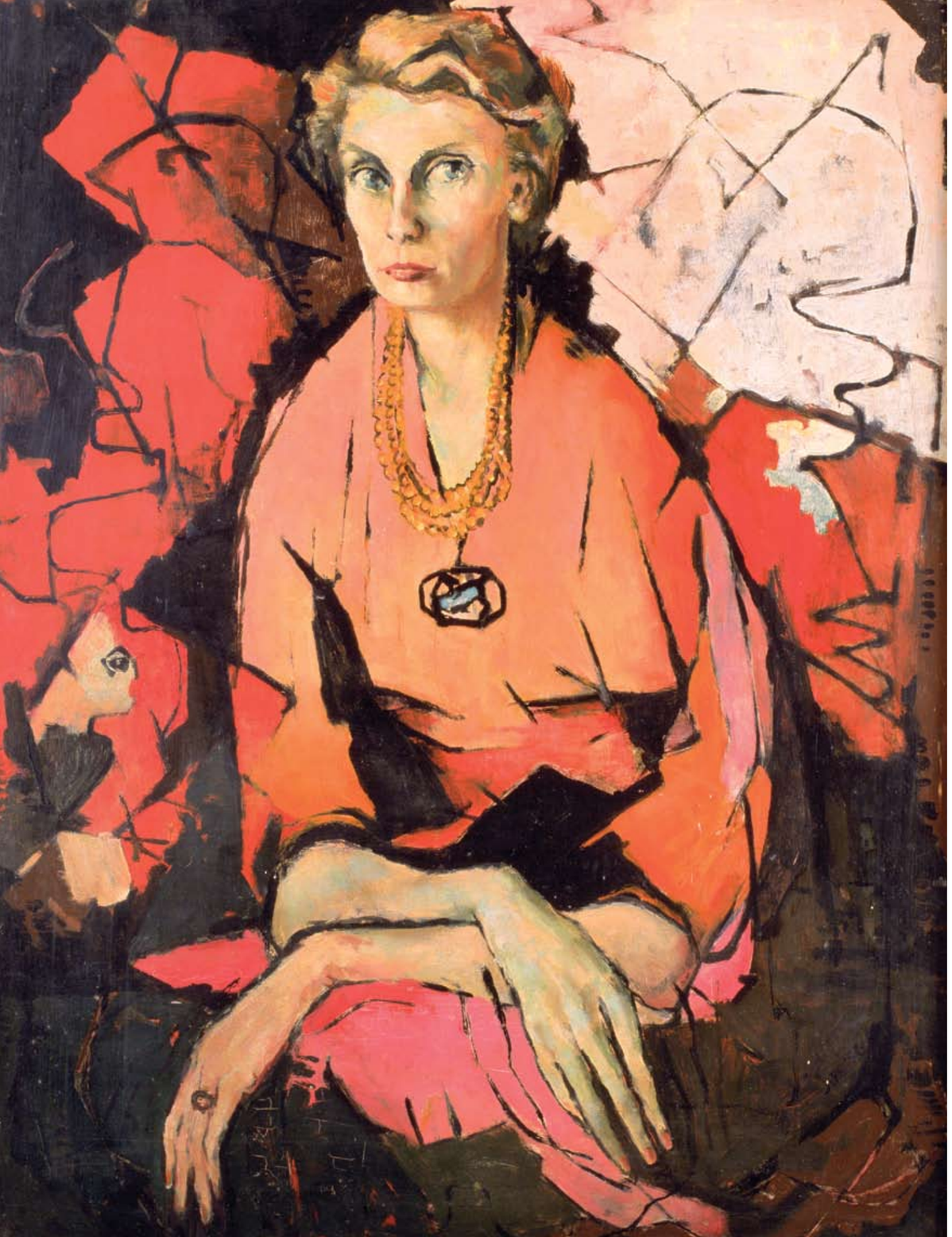
It is fitting that Mr Oatley, himself an avid sailor, has generously provided funds to purchase additional art works on the life of Captain Cook. This ongoing benefaction from Robert Oatley ensures the National Portrait Gallery's collection continues to grow and remain at the forefront of exploring and preserving the lives of eminent subjects who have shaped this country.

DIANA WARNES

Plaque portrait of Cook
c.1777 Wedgwood
Purchased with funds provided by Robert Oatley

Royal Society Medal in commemoration of Captain Cook obverse: Uniformed bust of James Cook 1784
Lewis Pingo
Purchased with funds provided by Robert Oatley

The death of Captain Cook
c.1784
Francesco Bartolozzi and William Byrne after John Webber
Purchased with funds provided by Robert Oatley



Kate 1956
Clifton Pugh

Melbourne experience

Dr Harold 'Hal' Hattam easily recalled a defining moment in 1956 while at his Melbourne home on Mont Albert Road, Canterbury. As an untrained artist, he remembers 'I was trying to do a bit of painting in my house, the person from down the road came in, his name was John Perceval and he said "would you like to come out painting?" I said, knowing who he was, I was very flattered. He said "I'll teach you". I said "okay, you can be my patient".'

The meeting was not entirely fortuitous – the pair had briefly met before. However, such an invitation certainly set in motion a future for Hattam of balancing a highly successful career as a leading obstetrician and gynaecologist, with his own painting ambitions. The professional careers of Hal and wife Katherine 'Kate' Hattam were inextricably linked to their roles as art patrons and in personal relationships with artist friends. Hal often delivered babies for all his artist friends and a suitable thank you gift for his services was a painting. Hal would initially decline the gifts and was keen to assert in an interview with Barbara Blackman, 'I would like to recall at the time of transaction, my fee was far in excess of what they could command at the marketplace for their paintings'. Meanwhile, Kate was the Advertising Manager for the upmarket department store, Georges. She employed such artists as Arthur Boyd, John Perceval and Leonard French to design wrapping paper and cards for the store. In the process she also earned an enviable reputation as the highest paid woman in Australia.

The couple assembled a fine collection of modern Australian art. Interestingly their art collecting tastes did not reflect a bias in the feisty modernist debates of figuration versus abstraction that dominated the Melbourne art scene from the mid 1950s through to the 1970s. The Hattams acquired examples from the Antipodean group – figurative painters who stood in defence of the image, including works by John Brack and Clifton Pugh through to the work of geometric abstractions and colour field painters, such as Dale Hickey and Robert Jacks. The couple are also credited as the first private collectors to embrace the art of Fred Williams wholeheartedly, building up a substantial group of paintings from 1958 onwards.

Hal and Kate Hattam's association with the modern art scene was a distinctly Melbourne experience. Yet they championed many artists, several of whom have made a significant contribution to the broader history of Australian art. It is fitting then they are represented in the National Portrait Gallery by two such artists – Kate, painted by Clifton Pugh in 1956 and a 1960 portrait of Hal by Fred Williams.

The portrait of Kate is characteristically Pugh. Elongated fingers, drooped shoulders in his favoured 'egg' form and angular facial features are a starkly colourful interpretation of likeness and character. The work was painted pre-Archibald Prize success and before Pugh had established himself as a leading portraitist. It demonstrates all the ambition and confidence of an artist breaking away from the tonal training he received under Sir William Dargie, instead formulating his own distinctive style of portraiture.

The abstract background of the painting of Kate is similarly employed in Pugh's 1957 portrait of ceramicist Tom Sanders. Pugh reflected on the Sanders painting, 'in those days I was under the influence of Kandinksy' and he also

Portrait of Harold Hattam 1965
John Brack
Private collection

OPPOSITE:
Hal Hattam 1960
Fred Williams
Gift of the Hattam family in memory of Hal and Kate Hattam 2006

Both Williams and Brack offer convincing portraits of Hal that seem to reinforce the notion of art patron and medical practitioner drifting between a current career and a potential future as an artist.

wanted to 'paint the chaos around him'. Both of these portraits are reproduced in *Involvement* a publication that depicts a subject as interpreted through the paintings of Pugh and the photographs of Mark Strizic. Intriguingly, Strizic included both Sanders and Kate surrounded by their children, Pugh did not. Kate, a mother of four children is not depicted in the painting in her maternal role, but instead appears as a shrewd business woman. Her piercing blue eyes, styled hair and medallion jewellery suggest a determined and fashionable woman. Pugh generally found women between twenty–five and forty–five 'so aware of the image that they are producing that they are difficult to get inside. This is a rare one done in that period, but then of course, I knew Kate so well. It was a picture I wanted to do'.

Kate and Hal regularly saw the Pughs at the beach at Shoreham, where each family had a house. The coastal location featured in Hal's later beachscape paintings. Despite the personalised and intimate experience of a shared holiday location, Pugh has ensured Kate appears as a businesswoman and arts patron.

Fred Williams has also depicted Hal in his profession as a medical practitioner and arts patron, not the artist he desired to be. The drab mottled suit and tie, crisp white shirt, emotionless facial expression and neat comb–over hairstyle are formal and impersonal. Williams has employed his usual painting approach of flattening the form against the picture plane, itself an uninspiring black background. Williams painted Hal on more than one occasion, a gesture indicative of a close relationship between artist and patron, painter and painter. Yet, the portrait gives no indication of Hal's own longing as an artist, rather a blunt separation of professional and personal life.

It is this quality that is captured in a 1965 portrait by another artist friend, John Brack. Hal is a solid, suited and stern figure in utter contrast to the boldly coloured wooden floor and richly textured rug. His face and upper body are masked by a dark shadow. As art historian Sasha Grishin has observed this veil 'serves both to make a broader comment on the depression and anxiety faced by Dr Hattam as well as to make a broader comment on the universal state of anxiety, a feature of the human condition'.

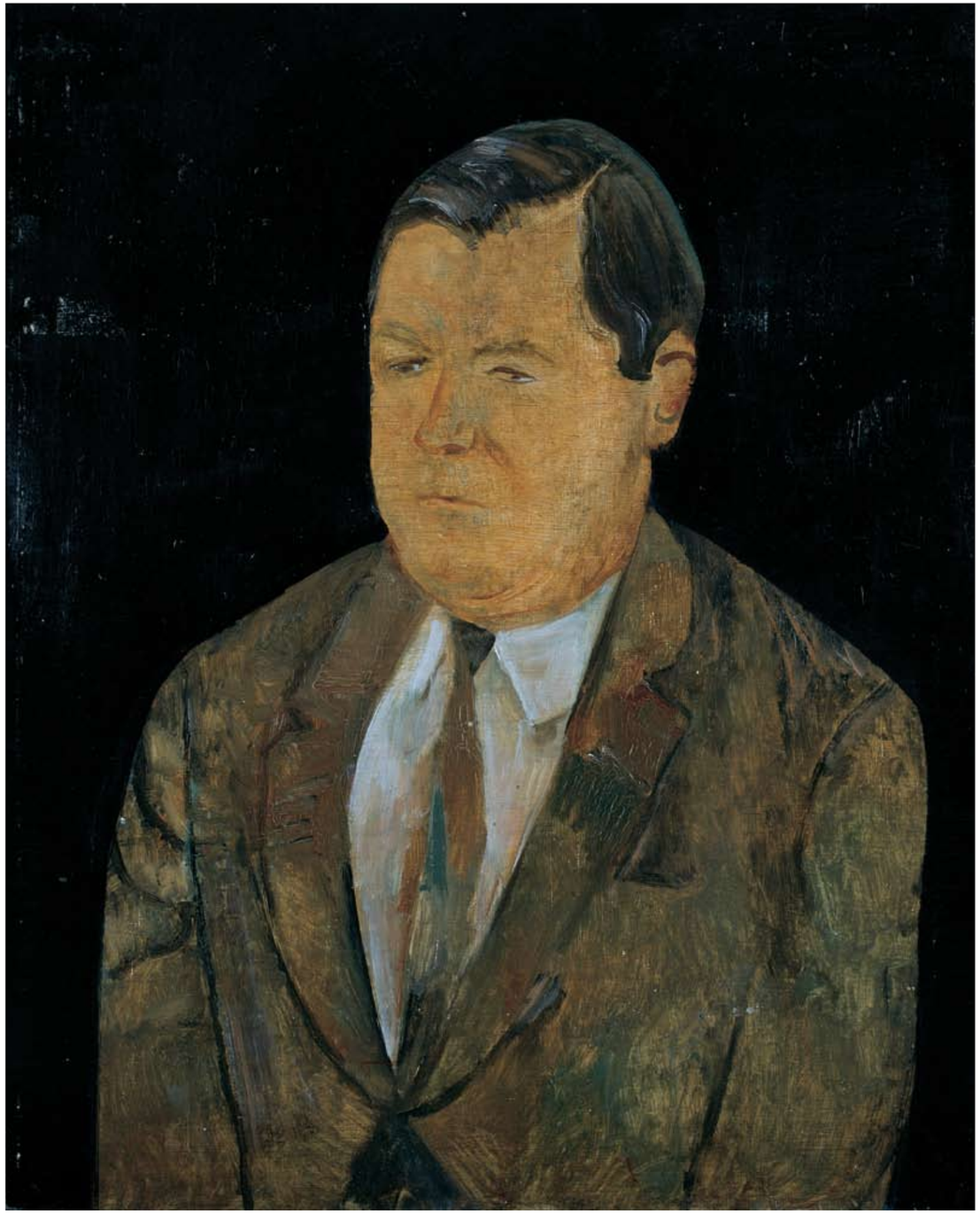
The relationship between Brack and Hattam was also a perceptive and informing two way interaction of shared ideas and experiences. Hal remembers the occasion he was driving Brack to the pub for a drink when the artist 'pressed the button for the glove box accidentally and out spilled a whole lot of scissors, surgical instruments onto his lap and that started him painting surgical instruments and looking into windows for orthopaedic devices'.

Both Williams and Brack offer convincing portraits of Hal that seem to reinforce the notion of art patron and medical practitioner drifting between a current career and a potential future as an artist. Poet and critic Chris Wallace–Crabbe's interpretation of Hattam's beachscapes suggests they 'bespeak the struggle to escape from a medical life, striving towards Bachelard's world of reveries; gradually making himself an inhabitant of that margin, the sea's fringe'.

In 1966 the Hattam family moved to 38 Cromwell Road, South Yarra, a relocation that coincided with Hal's sell–out solo show at the Joseph Brown Gallery. As Patrick McCaughey revealed in his aptly titled essay 'Hal Hattam and the landscape of longing', in the new home 'as the walls filled with paintings, so the rooms filled with artists and writers, critics and curators, fellow collectors and polo players'. It generated an atmosphere where 'people flitted in and out, unannounced and self–invited. Red wine was generously dispensed and arguments about painters and paintings, the foibles and foolishness of the art world, were ceaseless'.

The portrait Kate Hattam by Clifton Pugh and Hal Hattam by Fred Williams are recent acquisitions to the National Portrait Gallery and a wonderful summation of a couple of characters who excelled in their profession of medicine and advertising, but also played an important role as patrons of modern art in Australia.

DIANA WARNES



Design diary VI

The past three months has seen the design team's focus shift from the production of documentation to detailed coordination and fine tuning as John Holland draws together the input, ideas and skills of the various subcontractors, suppliers and tradespeople from the building industry that have been selected through the tendering process.

Although the detailed design was 'locked in' months ago, on large, complex projects like the National Portrait Gallery where there are tight tolerances, finite budgets, ambitious programmes and high expectations of quality, design never stops. In fact, in many respects the design process accelerates as construction continues and layouts, plans, specifications and schedules are transformed into real structural elements, propriety items and custom made equipment.

All the principal trade packages have now been issued for tender, and the design team are working closely with John Holland to review tender submissions.

Design development update

Alongside our day to day design activities, over the past few months we have been working to integrate additional environmental initiatives into the project.

Environmentally sustainable design is a key priority for any responsible client and design team and to be truly successful, the concept of sustainability should be integral to a project's conception not just a series of options or devices that can be added or subtracted. However, the design of an art gallery brings particular challenges: finding a balance between conflicting needs for display, comfortable and safe environments for visitors and staff, and conditions appropriate for the preservation, conservation and storage of collections that suits Canberra's climatic extremes.

We have endeavoured to develop a design solution that is an efficient synthesis of architecture, structure and services that is complementary to the values and objectives of the National Portrait Gallery and one that is environmentally sustainable and responsible.

The original competition winning design included a broad range of passive and active environmental systems. Additional funds allocated to the National Portrait Gallery in the 2007–08 Federal Budget for sustainable initiatives will further enhance the project's environmental credentials.

The additional initiatives include a range of active systems that will reduce the long term energy usage of the building without compromising the strict environmental requirements for the gallery spaces and the long term protection of the collections.

Construction update

Over the past three months construction has been progressing well despite several lengthy interruptions for rain. Whilst I'm sure most PORTRAIT readers will have welcomed the rain, it has complicated the construction process as John Holland have had to adjust their construction programme in response to changing site conditions. As it is not possible to leave form work for high quality concrete elements unprotected over periods of rain, some delays have occurred. However, we are working with John Holland to review how some time can be made up within the master programme. Options currently under review include increasing the amount of off-site prefabrication to simplify the critical path programme and amending some construction details that do not have aesthetic or functional implications, and that would allow more trades to work side by side.

Despite rain delays, by the end of July 2007 all the basement concrete elements, including the special slab area for the art storage areas, will be in place, and form work for the ground floor slabs will be well advanced.

The primary prototype is still under construction and has already proved to be a valuable tool in refining the construction process. Despite the apparent simplicity, building with concrete is a complex process and the final outcome is the result of a multitude of factors including the final make up of the concrete batch from the supplier, the time the concrete truck takes to deliver the batch to site, how the form work is setup, the manner in which the concrete is placed into the form work, and how the concrete is vibrated within the form to distribute the aggregate evenly. Even the ambient air temperature at the time of the pour can have an impact on the final quality, consistency and surface finish of the concrete.

We are now using the concrete wall sections of the prototype to test different methods of applying a texture to the concrete surface for the principal walls of the entrance hall and the northern and southern elevations. This finish distinguishes these elements from the smooth off-form concrete walls of the galleries. A range of finishing methods including bush-hammering, shot blasting and water blasting are being tested to determine the most appropriate method that can consistently produce an even surface texture over a large area. Many of these specialist techniques were relatively common thirty or forty years ago. However, they are far less common in the contemporary building industry, and we are finding that a re-training and re-testing process is sometimes necessary to recapture these skills from tradespeople who are no longer active in the industry but who are still able to pass on the skills and knowledge they acquired over their working lives to current generations. This knowledge transfer is important for the National Portrait Gallery project and the broader industry.

Off site work is also progressing; prototyping of the foyer roof structure is well advanced with a variety of construction and materials options being tested and refined. Detailed conversations with the precast concrete suppliers have commenced and within the next few weeks we will be visiting their factories to discuss stone aggregate mixes, panel finishes and textures and installation details for the concrete portals that form the eastern and western ends of each bay of the building.

The next few months are a critical phase for the project when the primary concrete walls at ground level that define the public spaces of the building will be constructed. All the team's efforts to date in prototyping, refining construction processes through the construction of the basement, and establishing quality procedures and systems will be brought together in the construction of these elements which will be forever visible.

Despite the daily challenges the project raises, we remain encouraged by John Holland's enthusiasm, professionalism and commitment to delivering a project of excellence. It is a credit to the collective efforts of all involved, both on and off site, that the project remains on track for completion in late 2008 and that the integrity of the original vision remains largely intact.

GRAEME DIX Director, Johnson Pilton Walker

Personal Hygiene 2007
Paul Oslo Davis
Still from an animated self portrait
Courtesy of the artist

OPPOSITE:
Self portrait 2007
Anita Johnston
Still from an animated self portrait
Courtesy of the artist

Shifting pixels

Animated self portraits

1. an·i·mat·e (v): to give life or vigour
Animation dominates many aspects of our lives including the scientific, defence and entertainment spheres. Forensic scientists use animation techniques to recreate crime scenes, medical professionals use animation to visualise the effects of diseases on the human body, and barely a blockbuster film can be made without the aid of CGI. Video, computer games and digitally animated media–scape such as the Second Life phenomenon are changing the way we learn and the way we interact with each other. The American military now employ animators to create flight and battle simulators as well as designing realistic games aimed at engaging new recruits.

Animation in Australia is big business and Australian animators are constantly generating a lot of interest from international critics. The Australian visual effects company Animal Logic employed hundreds of local artists for more than a year to create last year's Oscar winning animated film *Happy Feet*. In 2003, Adam Elliott's quirky and endearing character *Harvey Krumpet* was awarded an Oscar for Best Animated Short Film beating Disney, Pixar and Fox Studios to the chase. Barely out of film school, Sejong Park achieved a nomination for the same award in 2005 for his film *Birthday Boy* and last year Anthony Lucas received the same nomination for his work *The Mysterious Geographic Explorations of Jasper Morello*.

2. an·i·mat·e (v): to give (a film or character) the appearance of movement using animation techniques
In October the National Portrait Gallery will launch its first exhibition designed specifically for the online environment. *Animated* features self portraits created by some of Australia's most innovative visual artists and animators. The exhibition will showcase a variety of conceptual approaches and a host of different animating approaches ranging from the traditional stop motion, claymation and cel animation to computer animation techniques such as Flash, 3D animation and other CGI techniques in two and three dimensions.

The exhibition will demonstrate the appeal of animation to visual artists working in Australia through a broad spectrum of participants; ranging from industry professionals, through to visual artists and musicians. The exhibition also features artists at various different stages of their careers. Among the exhibitors are recent digital art graduates, emerging animators, established industry specialists and even an Oscar nominee.

3. an·i·mat·e (adj): alive or having life
The *Animated* project is unique for many reasons. Most significantly is the fact that the exhibition is restricted to self portraiture. Any animator will tell you that to 'bring something to life', using any technology, requires a microscopic understanding of how that particular subject appears, acts and moves. The *Animated* exhibition supplies artists with a subject they are already on intimate terms with; their own selves. The self portrait nature of the exhibition provides artists with the opportunity to re–present themselves; their likeness, personality, characteristics, memories, self–image and history using all the techniques the various technologies of animation provide.

Animation gives the artist the opportunity to combine the visual and the temporal; some artists construct a very literal realistic portrait exploring their physical appearance, whilst others develop and project their notions of their impression on the world through the combination of allegory and metaphor.

The availability of movement and sound provide opportunities for expression not possible in other forms of portraiture. The *Animated* participants are not restricted to a single shot, a moment in time; a static display. Instead, they can explore and combine all the elements of consciousness to create a portrait that that is not just a face but a life.

Computer animation techniques enable the artist to engage with the audience in the form of interactive animations. The 'don't touch the art' rule is playfully disregarded as viewers of these animations take control of the action. In this self portrait project, the animators become the animated.

GILLIAN RAYMOND

On show

Animated

portrait.gov.au From 26 October 2007

The exhibition will display self-portraits by some of Australia's most innovative animators. Approximately 20 animated portraits will be assembled in a virtual exhibition on the National Portrait Gallery website. The exhibition will showcase a variety of conceptual approaches and a host of different techniques, for example stop frame animation, collage, claymation, traditional cell animation, and flash animation as well as 3D animation and other CGI techniques in two and three dimensions. The exhibition takes advantage of the capabilities and limitations of new, screen based technology.

Weissbeer, Dhonna, Becoming Small 2007 Rick Bull Still from an animated self portrait Courtesy of the artist

National Photographic Portrait Prize 2007

The winning entry from the National Photographic Portrait Prize 2007 will be announced on 6 December 2007 and will be accompanied by an exhibition of the finalists' photographs. The exhibition will run until 23 March 2008. Approximately sixty portraits will be displayed in the National Portrait Gallery.

Headspace 8: The Journey

Commonwealth Place 15 September to 4 November 2007

This year's theme calls upon students to consider the concept of 'The Journey'. Through their work, in a myriad of mediums, this year students have explored the exhibition theme broadly. Students analysed their conceptions of journeying and travel creatively. They have produced works that show, for example, the passage of time, a personal quest; ways in which we navigate; a choice of direction; a journey remembered; a journey imagined; what are you going towards?; what would it mean to go back?; the point of departure; or arriving at their destination.

Barefoot and at Home Anthea Costin; *Happiness is Australia* Farzana Shafaq; *The Traveller* Alex Clowe-Riddell; *Blue Boy* Timothy Sands; *Journey into Me* Ashleigh Ryan Black Mountain School

Themes and variations (Annelies) A7 1946 Henri Matisse National Gallery of Australia

Matisse and Portraits

Old Parliament House 21 September – 21 October 2007

From the National Gallery of Australia's extensive International Prints and Drawings Collection, this exhibition of Matisse's work is presented in association with the 2007 National Portrait Gallery Annual Lecture: *Matisse's Women.*

The 2007 National Portrait Gallery Annual lecture: Matisse's Women

Celebrated British author Hilary Spurling will deliver the National Portrait Gallery's 2007 Annual Lecture. Spurling's biography of Matisse, surprisingly the first and only biography of the artist, is exceptional and considered a model biography in terms of its elegant style and rigorous research. Her two volumes on Matisse's life won a number of awards, including the prestigious Whitbread Book of the Year Award in 2005. An exhibition of drawings and prints by Henri Matisse will be on display at the Gallery to coincide with the annual lecture.

National Portrait Gallery, Old Parliament House, 6.00pm Wednesday 26 September

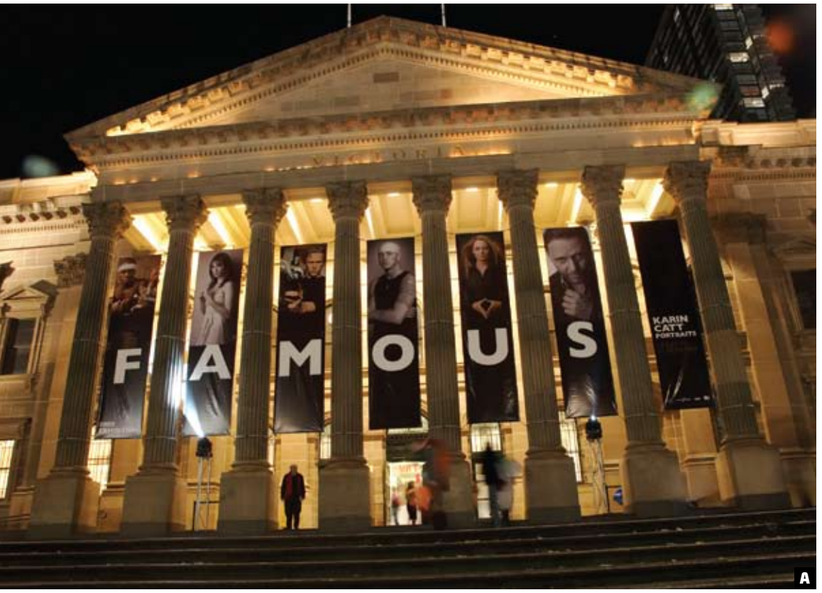
Admission: $25 Circle of Friends: $15 Bookings essential: 02 6270 8236

Marriage of Convenience 1987 Anna Zahalka

Hall of Mirrors: Anne Zahalka Portraits 1987-2007

Commonwealth Place 23 November 2007 to 31 March 2008

Hall of Mirrors: Anne Zahalka Portraits 1987-2007 explores the thread of portraiture through the artist's prolific career, now spanning more than 20 years. Tampering with truth in representation, blurring the boundary between reality and fiction, Zahalka uses a variety of photo-media techniques. Incorporating photomontage, double exposure and darkroom trickery in her early images, she embraced Photoshop soon after its inception in 1990. Her practice has consistently enquired into the nature of image making and its relationship to the world around us. Through an assemblage of cultural symbols and art-historical references, Zahalka questions what a portrait can actually tell us about someone, and highlights photography's ability to command, distort or deny the truth. With acute observation and an ironic voice, Zahalka cleverly subverts stereotypes, capturing subcultures and a spirit of the times.



A


B


C

State Library of Victoria Image Studio

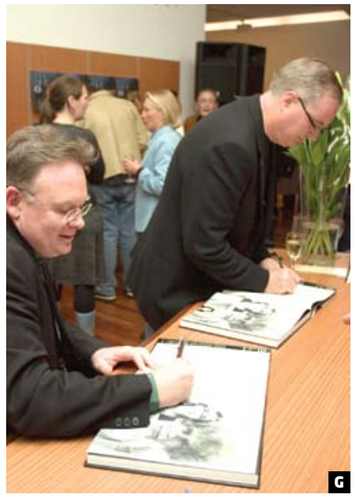
In frame

Studio: Photographs by R. Ian Lloyd; touring exhibition *Famous: Karin Catt*; Inspiration + Realisation masterclasses; celebration of AD Hope


D


E


F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State Library of Victoria Image Studio


M

A *Famous: Karin Catt*, State Library of Victoria
B Inspiration + Realisation masterclass C Geoff Page and David Brooks D Yvette Watt and Leanne Gundry
E Jiawei Shen Inspiration + Realisation masterclass
F Peter and Lola Wilkins G John MacDonald and R. Ian Lloyd H Rosemary Brissenden and David Brooks
I Erica Seccombe, Heidi McDonald and Anne McDonald
J Wendy Sharpe Inspiration + Realisation masterclass
K Philippa Peterson L Karin Catt M Andrew Sayers
N John Stokes and Marion Halligan O Annie Pritchard and Naomi Zouwer


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